

Application No. 10/733,051
Response dated: January 18, 2006
Reply to Office action of September 19, 2005

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action dated September 19, 2005, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration based on the above claim amendments and following remarks.

Applicants respectfully submit that the claims as presented are in condition for allowance.

Claims 1-28 are pending in the present Application. Claims 14 and 28 are amended leaving Claims 1-28 for consideration upon entry of the following remarks.

Claims 14 and 28 are amended to correct an inadvertent typographical error. The "reflecting plate" is changed to the "reflecting surface" consistent with the limitations of parent Claims 1 and 15.

No new matter has been introduced by these amendments. Reconsideration and allowance of the claims are respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-3, 5, 14-17 and 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Sawayama, U.S. Patent No. 6,048,071 (hereinafter "Sawayama"). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections.

"A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference." *Verdegaal Bros. V. Union Oil Co. of California*, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987).

In the Office Action details, the light conducting body 24, first light exiting surface 28, reflective plate 17 and light entry surface 25 of Sawayama are cited as disclosing the light guide plate, light exiting surface, light reflecting surface and side surfaces of the claimed invention, respectively. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Sawayama discloses the light-conducting body 24 includes first light exit surface 28 and second light exit surface 23 are provided parallel to one another. (Col. 12, lines 12-28 and Figure 1.) A light entry surface 25 is provided on an incline so as to form an *obtuse angle* with the first light exit surface 28. (*Id.*) That is, light entry surface 25 extends in a direction *outward or away from* the first light exit surface 28. Therefore, Sawayama does not disclose the first

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lamp unit being disposed adjacent to the first light incident surface, and the first light incident surface inclining inwardly from the light exiting surface of Claims 1 and 15.

Sawayama also discloses a reflective plate 17 is attached outside of the electrode substrates 11 a and 11b, the liquid crystal 12, the polarizing plate 18 and filler agent 19. (Col. 12, lines 43 through Col. 13, line 43 and Figure 1.) That is, the reflective plate 17 is not included in the light-conducting body 24. Therefore, Sawayama does not disclose a light guide plate including a light exiting surface and a light reflecting surface that reflects light toward the light exiting surface of Claims 1 and 15.

Furthermore, the light entry surface 25 is connected to the first light exit surface 28, but not to the reflective plate 17. That is, the light entry surface 25 does not connect the first light exit surface 28 and the reflective plate 17. Therefore, Sawayama does not disclose side surfaces that connect the light exiting surface and the light reflecting surface, the side surfaces including a first light incident surface of Claims 1 and 15.

Regarding Claim 5, the Office Action details cite lamp electrodes 11a and 11b and reflecting mirror 27 of Sawayama as teaching the limitations of Claim 5. Applicants respectfully disagree. Firstly, a first and second lamp electrode line is recited in Claim 5, not merely lamp electrodes as indicated in the Office Action. Secondly, Sawayama is silent as to disclosing any connections between the lamp electrodes and the light source 26, let alone any lamp electrode line. Therefore, Sawayama does not disclose a first lamp electrode line being electrically connected to a first end of the lamp a second lamp electrode line being electrically connected to a second end of the lamp of Claim 5.

Regarding Claims 14 and 28 as discussed above, the claims are hereinabove amended changing "the light reflecting plate" to "the light reflecting *surface*" as is consistent with the limitations of the parent Claims 1 and 15. The Office Action details cite the reflecting plate 17 of Sawayama as teaching the reflection plate of Claims 14 and 28. However, the Office Action details earlier cite the reflection plate 17 as teaching the light reflecting surface of Claims 1 and 15. That is, the reflection plate 17 of Sawayama is being cited as both the light reflecting surface of the light guide plate and the reflection plate of the claimed invention. The reflection plate 17 cannot be disposed under itself and reflect light toward itself as contended in the Office Action details. Therefore, Sawayama does not disclose a reflection plate disposed under the light

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reflecting surface of the light guide plate, the reflection plate reflecting a light that is leaked from the light guide plate toward the light guide plate of Claims 14 and 28.

Thus, Sawayama does not disclose all of the limitations of Claims 1, 5, 14 (as amended), 15 and 28 (as amended). Accordingly, Sawayama does not anticipate Claims 1, 5, 14, 15 and 28. Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 1, 5, 14, 15 and 28 are not further rejected or objected and are therefore allowable. As Claims 2, 3, 16 and 17 variously depend from allowable Claims 1 and 15, they are thus correspondingly allowable. Reconsideration, entry of the amendments, withdrawal of the relevant rejections and allowance of Claims 1-3, 5, 14-17 and 28 is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 4, 6-8, and 18-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Sawayama in view of Cha et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,779,902 (hereinafter "Cha"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections.

For an obviousness rejection to be proper, the Examiner must meet the burden of establishing that all elements of the invention are disclosed in the prior art and that the prior art relied upon, coupled with knowledge generally available in the art at the time of the invention, must contain some suggestion or incentive that would have motivated the skilled artisan to modify a reference or combined references. *In re Fine*, 5 U.S.P.Q.2d 1596, 1598 (Fed. Cir. 1988); *In Re Wilson*, 165 U.S.P.Q. 494, 496 (C.C.P.A. 1970); *Amgen v. Chugai Pharmaceuticals Co.*, 927 U.S.P.Q.2d, 1016, 1023 (Fed. Cir. 1996).

Claims 4, 6-8 and 18-22 variously depend from Claims 1 and 15 and therefore include all of the limitations of Claims 1 and 15. As discussed above, Claims 1 and 15 are allowable over Sawayama. Cha is relied upon to teach two light incident surfaces and does not disclose a light guide plate including a light exiting surface, a light reflecting surface that reflects light toward the light exiting surface, and a first light incident surface, the first light incident surface inclining inwardly from the light exiting surface as claimed. Therefore, Cha does not cure the deficiencies of Sawayama regarding Claim 1 and 15, and consequently Claims 4, 6-8 and 18-22.

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As discussed above, Sawayama and Cha, alone or in combination, *do not teach or suggest all of the limitations* of Claims 4, 6-8 and 18-22. Thus, *prima facie* obviousness does not exist regarding Claims 4, 6-8 and 18-22 with respect to the Sawayama and Cha patents.

Additionally, since Sawayama and Cha fail to teach or suggest all of the limitations of Claims 4, 6-8 and 18-22, clearly, one of ordinary skill at the time of Applicants' invention would not have a *motivation to modify or combine the references*, nor a reasonable likelihood of success in forming the claimed invention by the Examiner's modifying or combining the references. Thus, here again, *prima facie* obviousness does not exist with respect to the Sawayama and Cha patents. *Id.*

Thus, the requirements of *prime facie* obviousness are not met by the Examiner's 35 U.S.C. 103(a) rejection of Claims 4, 6-8 and 18-22 with respect to Sawayama and Cha. Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 4, 6-8 and 18-22 are not further rejected or objected, and are therefore allowable. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the relevant rejections is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 9-13 and 23-27 are objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims. Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's noting the allowable subject matter in Claims 9-13 and 23-27, but Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 1 and 15, from which Claims 9-13 and 23-27 variously depend, is patentably distinct over the cited art, as discussed above. As such, Applicants have not rewritten Claims 9-13 and 23-27 in independent form at this time.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the instant application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that this application be allowed and a Notice of Allowance issued. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference

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with Applicants' attorneys would be advantageous to the disposition of this case, the Examiner is cordially requested to telephone the undersigned.

In the event the Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks deems additional fees to be due in connection with this application, Applicants' attorney hereby authorizes that such fee be charged to Deposit Account No. 06-1130.

Respectfully submitted,

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